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ROMANS 16

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS ⁴	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Personal Greetings	Sister Phoebe Recommended	Greetings	Personal Greetings	Greetings and Good Wishes
16:1-2	16:1-2	16:1-2	16:1-2	16:1-2
	Greeting Roman Saints			
16:3-16	16:3-16	16:3-16	16:3-5a	16:3-5a
			16:5b-7	16:5b-16
			16:8-11	
			16:12-15	
			16:16	
	Avoid Divisive Persons		Final Instructions	A Warning and First Postscript
16:17-20	16:17-20	16:17-20	16:17-20a	16:17-20
			16:20b-21	
	Greetings From Paul's Friends			Last Greetings and Second Postscript
16:21-23	16:21-24	16:21		16:21-23
		16:22	16:22	
		16:23	16:23	
Doxology	Benediction		Concluding Prayer of Praise	Doxology
16:25-27	16:25-27	16:25-27	16:25-26	16:25-27
			16:27	

READING CYCLE THREE (see ["Bible Interpretation Seminar"](#))
FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT PARAGRAPH LEVEL

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects (reading cycle #3). Compare your subject divisions with the five translations above. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS TO ROMANS 16: 1-27

A. Notice that all of the women in this closing section were fellow-workers with Paul in the gospel (cf. Phil. 4:3):

1. Phoebe in Rom. 16:1
2. Prisca in Rom. 16:3
3. Mary in Rom. 16:6
4. Junia (or Junias—if so it was a man) in Rom. 16:7
5. Tryphaena and Tryphosa in Rom. 16:12
6. Persis in Rom. 16:12
7. "his mother" in Rom. 16:13
8. Julia in Rom. 16:15
9. "his sister" in Rom. 16:15

Be careful of dogmatism in the area of women in ministry. All believers are called, gifted (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7,11), full-time ministers (cf. Eph. 4:12).

In this list we have a woman deacon, Phoebe, and a possible woman apostle, Junia (cf. Joel 2:28; Acts 2:16-21). It is difficult to know how to handle this issue biblically because of the seemingly paradoxical statements of Paul such as 1 Cor. 11:4-5 compared with 14:34 and 1 Timothy 2:8-15. See my exegetical notes on each of these passages online.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: WOMEN IN THE BIBLE](#)

[SPECIAL TOPIC: WOMEN IN MINISTRY](#)

[SPECIAL TOPIC: WOMEN KEEP SILENT](#)

B. Notice the possible racial backgrounds of these names

1. believing Jews: Aquila, Prisca, Andronicus, Junias, Mary (some MSS have Mariam)
2. Roman noble family names: Prisca, Ampliatus, Apelles, Narcissus, Julia, Philologus
3. Jewish noble family names: Aristobulus, Herodion

Paul ministered with women from several cultural backgrounds.

C. This chapter can be outlined as

1. verses 1-16 are Paul's personal greetings
2. verses 17-20 are his closing warnings against false teachers
3. verses 21-23 contain the mission team's greetings from Corinth

D. The discussion of Romans 16 in the *Tyndale New Testament Commentary* by F. F. Bruce is very helpful. If you are interested in a detailed study of the names found in this chapter, read pages 266-284.

E. There is some doubt about where Paul's letter to the Roman church closes. A closing prayer appears several times at the end of

1. Romans 14
2. Romans 15 (MS P⁴⁶)
3. Romans 16, in the ancient Greek manuscripts

However, the traditional close of Rom. 16:25-27 appears in MSS P⁶¹, 8, B, C and D as well as the Greek text used by Clement of Rome (A.D. 95). The UBS⁴ gives the traditional

conclusion (vv. 25-27) a "C" rating, meaning the committee could not decide if it was original.

Verse 24 does not appear in the older Greek manuscripts, P⁴⁶, P⁶¹, $\aleph$, A, B, C, nor the Latin Vulgate or the Greek text used by Origen of Alexandria. The UBS⁴ rates its omission as "B" (almost certain).

For a full discussion of the variants see Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, pp. 533-540.

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 16:1-2

¹I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; ²that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

16:1 "I commend to you" Verses 1-2 function as a letter of recommendation for deaconess Phoebe. She probably carried Paul's letter to Rome. There are several other examples of these letters of introduction or recommendation in the NT (cf. Acts 18:27; 1 Cor. 16:3; 2 Cor. 3:1; 8:18-24; and Phil. 2:19-30).

[SPECIAL TOPIC: LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION](#)

[SPECIAL TOPIC: DEACONESS](#)

▣ **"Phoebe"** Her name meant "bright" or "radiant."

16:1

NASB, NKJV	"who is a servant of the church"
NRSV	"a deacon of the church"
TEV	"who serves the church"
NJB, Peshitta	"a deaconess of the church"
REB	"a fellow-Christian"

This is the term *diakonos*. It is an ACCUSATIVE SINGULAR FEMININE form. It is the Greek term for minister/servant. It is used

1. of Christ in Rom. 15:8; Mark 10:45
2. of Paul in Eph. 3:7; Col. 1:23,25
3. of deacons in Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:11

There is evidence in both the NT and early post-biblical church writings for the office of deaconess. Another example of women in local church ministry in the NT is "the widows' roll" of the Pastorals (cf. 1 Tim. 3:11; 5:3-16).

1. The RSV, Amplified, and Phillips translations have "deaconess" in Rom. 16:1.
2. The NASB and NIV have it in the footnotes.
3. The NEB has "who holds office."

All believers are called, gifted, full-time ministers (cf. Eph. 4:12). Some are called to leadership ministry roles. Our traditions must give way to Scripture! These early deacons and deaconesses were servants, not executive boards.

M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*, vol. 2, pp. 752 and 1196, says that the *Apostolical Constitutions*, dating from the late second or early third century, makes a distinction between the duties and ordination of female church helpers.

1. deaconesses

2. widows (cf. 1 Tim. 3:11; 5:9-10)
3. virgins (cf. Acts 21:9 and possibly 1 Cor. 7:34)

These duties involved

1. caring for the sick
2. caring for those physically persecuted
3. visiting those in prison for the faith
4. teaching new believers
5. assisting in baptism of women
6. some overseeing of female church members

[SPECIAL TOPIC: WOMEN IN THE BIBLE](#)

[SPECIAL TOPIC: DEACONESS](#)

[SPECIAL TOPIC: WOMEN IN MINISTRY](#)

▣ **"church"** See [SPECIAL TOPIC: CHURCH \(EKKLĒSIA\)](#)

▣ **"Cenchraea"** This was one of two seaports of Corinth. This one was on the eastern side (i.e., Aegean Sea, cf. Acts 18:18).

16:2 "that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy" This is an AORIST MIDDLE [deponent] SUBJUNCTIVE of *prosdechomai*, which means "to receive kindly as a guest" (cf. Phil. 2:29). Paul trusted this lady and wanted the church to receive her and help her on his behalf. The very fact that he needed to say this shows the cultural climate of the first century in the Mediterranean world (except for Macedonia).

▣ **"saints"** This term means "holy ones." It describes not only a believers' position in Jesus (i.e., positional sanctification), but also hopefully their godly lives, progressively characterizing their new holy position in Christ (i.e., progressive sanctification). The term "saint" is always in the PLURAL except once in Philippians (Phil. 4:21) and even there it is in a corporate sense. To be a Christian is to be part of a believing community, a family, a body. The modern church in the west has depreciated this corporate aspect of biblical faith!

[SPECIAL TOPIC: SAINTS](#)

[SPECIAL TOPIC: SANCTIFICATION](#)

[SPECIAL TOPIC: BIBLICAL FAITH IS CORPORATE](#)

▣ **"help her in whatever matter she may have need of you"** There are two SUBJUNCTIVES.

1. The first, *paristēmi* (AORIST ACTIVE), means "to stand by so as to aid."
2. The second, *chrēzō* (PRESENT ACTIVE), means "to help with whatever is required" (cf. 2 Cor. 3:1).
3. This referred to material provisions for itinerant ministers. This was the purpose of letters of recommendation.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION](#)

▣

NASB, NKJV, Peshitta "has been a helper of many"

NRSV "has been a benefactor of many"

TEV, REB "for she herself has been a good friend to many people"

NJB "has looked after a great many people"

This term, *proistatis*, is found only here in the NT. This could have referred to physical or financial help. This word originally referred to a wealthy patroness. Since Phoebe was traveling to Rome (cf. Rom. 16:1) and had helped many (cf. Rom. 16:2), this may be historically true of her.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 16:3-16

³Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; ⁵also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaphroditus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia. ⁶Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. ⁷Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. ⁸Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. ⁹Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. ¹⁰Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the *household* of Aristobulus. ¹¹Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those of the *household* of Narcissus, who are in the Lord. ¹²Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, workers in the Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who has worked hard in the Lord. ¹³Greet Rufus, a choice man in the Lord, also his mother and mine. ¹⁴Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the brethren with them. ¹⁵Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. ¹⁶Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

16:3 "Prisca and Aquila" Luke calls her "Priscilla." She is often named before her husband, which was culturally very unusual (cf. Acts 18:18, 26; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19). Possibly she was of Roman nobility or the dominant personality of this couple. Both Paul and this couple were tent-makers or leather workers. Paul calls them "fellow workers in Christ Jesus." He possibly heard of the strengths and weaknesses of the Roman church from this couple.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: AQUILA AND PRISCA/PRICILLA](#)

16:4 "risked their own necks" This is an idiom from the term for an "executioner's axe." The Bible is silent on what Paul meant by this phrase.

▣ **"to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles"** Paul was very grateful for the friendship and active help of this couple. He even expands their service to "all the churches of the Gentiles." What a sweeping affirmation and thanksgiving! It might refer to their encouraging and informing ministry to Apollos (cf. Acts 18:24-28).

16:5 "the church" This refers to a people, not a building. The term meant "the called out ones." In the Greek OT, the Septuagint (LXX), this term was used to translate the Hebrew term *qahal*, translated "congregation." The early Church saw themselves as the natural successors and fulfillment of the OT phrase "congregation of Israel," and not a sectarian splinter group.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: CHURCH](#)

▣ **"that is in their house"** The early Christians met in homes (cf. Rom. 16:23; Acts 12:12; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15 and Philemon 2). Church buildings did not appear until the third century A.D.

▣ **"Epaphroditus"** This man's name means "praised."

▣ **"who is the first convert"** This is also said of the household of Stephanas in 1 Cor. 16:15.

▣ **"from Asia"** This referred to the Roman province which made up the western one-third of modern Turkey.

16:6 "Mary, who has worked hard for you" Nothing is known about this person. She may have been a missionary from the Roman church. So many wonderful, godly believers are unknown to us but well known to God.

16:7 "my fellow prisoners" Modern scholars are not certain to what imprisonment this referred. Paul suffered much for his faith (cf. 2 Cor. 4:8-11; 6:4-10; 11:25-28). He was in prison at Philippi, Caesarea, Rome, and probably other places as well (cf. Ephesus, 1 Cor. 15:32; 2 Cor. 1:8).

▣ **"Junias"** This name could be MASCULINE or FEMININE, which must be determined by accent marks. There are Greek manuscript variations.

1. "Iounian," is found in MSS 8, A, B, C, D, F, G and P, but with no accent mark
2. The accented FEMININE form is found in MSS B², D², and 0150.
3. The early papyrus manuscript P⁴⁶ and some Vulgate and Coptic translations, as well as the Greek texts used by Jerome, have "Ioulia" which is FEMININE.

Some scholars think that this was a scribal error. This FEMININE form does occur in Rom. 16:15.

It is possible that the two persons named in Rom. 16:7 (i.e., Andronicus and Junias) were

1. two Jewish believers who were imprisoned with Paul
2. a brother and sister
3. a husband and wife

If it is FEMININE and if the phrase "the apostles" referred to a wider use of that term than "the Twelve," then this was a lady apostle. See [SPECIAL TOPIC: APOSTLE](#)

It is also interesting that the spelling "Junias" has not been found anywhere in Roman literature or inscriptions, but the name "Junia" was very common. It was a Roman family name. For more information on women in ministry see *Women Leaders and the Church*, by Linda L. Belleville, pp. 188 footnote 42.



NASB	"who are outstanding among the apostles"
NKJV	"who are of note among the apostles"
NRSV	"they are prominent among the apostles"
TEV	"they are well known among the apostles"
NJB	"to those outstanding apostles"
REB	"who are eminent among the apostles"
Peshitta	"well-known among the apostles"

This can refer to the Twelve, if so these two were well known to the church in Rome, or to a wider group of ministers known as "apostles" (cf. Acts 14:4, 14; 18:5; 1 Cor. 4:9; Gal. 1:19; Phil. 2:25; 1 Thess. 2:6). The context implies this wider usage, as in Eph. 4:11, but the DEFINITE ARTICLE implies the Twelve.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: SEND \(APOSTELLO\)](#)

▣ **"who also were in Christ before me"** This obviously means they were saved and active in Christ's service before Paul's Damascus road experience (i.e., Acts 9).

16:8-16 The names in this section are unknown to scholarship. They are beloved of God and Paul, but their names and service are not recorded in the NT or early Christian literature. What is

remarkable is that there is a mixture of

1. common slave names
2. noble Roman
3. Jewish family names

There are both men and women. There are wealthy freedman and itinerant preachers. There are foreigners from Persia. All barriers are down in the church of Jesus Christ (cf. Rom. 3:22; 10:12; Joel 2:28-32 [Acts 2:14-21]; 1 Cor. 12:11; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:11-3:13; Col. 3:11)! The gospel is an open door for all who will respond.

16:8 "Ampliatius" This name, like Prisca and Junia, was a well known Roman family name.

▣ **"my beloved in the Lord"** The term "beloved" is used by God the Father for Jesus the Son at His baptism in Matt. 3:17 and at His transfiguration in Matt. 17:5. It may be a title from the Servant Songs of Isaiah (cf. Matt. 12:18, quoting Isa. 42:1). However, Paul uses it to address believers (cf. Rom. 1:7; 16:8,9; 1 Cor. 4:14,17; 15:58; Eph. 6:21; Phil. 2:12; Col. 4:7,9,14; 1 Tim. 6:2; Philemon 16).

16:9 "Urbanus" The name means "city dweller" or "city bred."

▣ **"in Christ"** This is a repeated phrase, along with "in the Lord," throughout this chapter. These Christian workers were all part of one family, one Savior.

▣ **"Stachys"** This is a rare name which means "ear" (of grain). Archaeology has found this name associated with Caesar's family.

16:10 "the approved in Christ" This idiomatic phrase refers to one who had gone through trials and remained faithful.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: GREEK TERMS FOR TESTING, #1](#)

▣ **"those of the household"** Some scholars speculate that this phrase refers to slaves in the domestic service of Aristobulus and not family members, and the same is true of the phrase in Rom. 16:11, "those of the household of Narcissus."

▣ **"of Aristobulus"** Some scholars (Lightfoot) speculate that this was the brother of Herod Agrippa I (who in Acts 12 had the Apostle James killed). If so, it shows how the gospel had begun to permeate this royal Idumean family.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: THE FAMILY OF HEROD THE GREAT](#)

16:11 "Herodian" This may have been a slave of the family of Herod.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: HERODIANS](#)

▣ **"those of the household of Narcissus"** This may have referred to the well known servant of Emperor Claudius. If so, it shows how the gospel had begun to permeate the Roman royalty.

16:12 "Tryphaena" This name means "dainty."

▣ **"Tryphosa"** This name means "delicate." They were possibly sisters, even twins.

▣ **"worked hard"** The term has the connotation of labor "to the point of exhaustion."

▣ **"Persis"** This means "Persian woman."

16:13 "Rufus" This name means "red" or "red-headed." There was an apparently well known Rufus in Rome (cf. Mark 15:21). Whether he can be identified with this person is uncertain but surely possible.



NASB	"a choice man in the Lord"
NKJV, NRSV, Peshitta	"chosen in the Lord"
TEV	"that outstanding worker in the Lord's service"
NJB	"a chosen servant of the Lord"
REB	"an outstanding follower of the Lord"

This is literally "the elect one." Here the term relates not only to God's call, but also to his lifestyle service. His mother also treated Paul with great affection.

16:14 "Hermes" This is the name of the Greek god of good luck. It was a very common slave name of the first century Greco-Roman world.

16:15 "all the saints" See [SPECIAL TOPIC: SAINTS](#)

16:16 "holy kiss" There is no early written evidence of who kissed who, or when, or where. In the synagogue, whose form of greeting was continued in the church, the men kissed men on the cheek and the women kissed the women (cf. 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26; 1 Pet. 5:14). This act of greeting became a problem within the church because it was misunderstood by unbelievers and, therefore, was stopped in some churches, although Justin Martyr mentions it in the second century.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 16:17-20

¹⁷Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. ¹⁸For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. ¹⁹For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. ²⁰The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

16:17-18 This warning seems to break into the context unexpectedly. However, Paul may have included it as a contrast to godly itinerant ministers. There is a list in Rom. 16:17-18 of what these false teachers were doing.

1. they stirred up divisions
2. they put hindrances in the believer's way
3. they taught in opposition to the instruction the church had given (i.e., apostolic truth)
4. they were serving their own base appetites
5. they were deceiving the hearts of unsuspecting people by their smooth, flattering talk

This list is not related to the weak and strong believers of Rom. 14:1-15:13.

▣ **"turn away from them"** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. This is a recurrent theme (cf. Gal. 1:8-9; 2 Thess. 3:6,14; 2 John 10). This was a form of church discipline. These were apparently in the house churches of Rome.

16:18

NASB, NRSV, TEV, REB "their own appetites"

NKJV, Peshitta "their own belly"

NJB "their own greed"

This is literally "bellies" (cf. Phil. 3:19; Titus 1:12). The false teachers turned everything to their own base interests.

▣ **"by their smooth and flattering speech"** False teachers are often physically attractive and have dynamic personalities (cf. Col. 2:4). They are often very logical in their presentations. Beware! Some possible biblical tests to identify false teachers are found in Deut. 13:1-5; 18:22; Matt. 7; Phil. 3:2-3, 18-19; 1 John 4:1-3.

▣ **"they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting"** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE INDICATIVE denoting ongoing deception. These apparently new or naive believers were vulnerable ("inexperienced in evil"). This same problem is mentioned in 1 Timothy and Titus.

16:19 "the report of your obedience has reached to all" This is referred to in Rom. 1:8. This is one of Paul's hyperboles. See G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*, pp. 22, 110-117, 121, 133, 181.

▣ **"be wise. . . in what is good, and innocent in what is evil"** This reflects the teaching of Jesus (cf. Matt. 10:16; Luke 10:3).

16:20 "the God of peace" This is a wonderful title for God (cf. Rom. 15:33; 2 Cor. 13:16; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:23 and Heb. 13:20). See note at Rom. 15:5.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: PEACE \(NT\)](#)

[SPECIAL TOPIC: PEACE \(OT\)](#)

▣ **"will soon crush Satan under your feet"** This is an allusion to Gen. 3:15. The believer's relationship with the Messiah gives them victory over evil (cf. 1 John 5:18-20). This is an awesome promise and responsibility. In this context Satan epitomizes the confusion and division caused by false teachers which causes the church to lose its Great Commission focus. Behind false teachers is the demonic (cf. 1 Cor. 10:20; Eph. 6:10-18)! The gospel, however, dispels darkness and evil for those who embrace it and live it. For a good book on this subject see *Three Crucial Questions About Spiritual Warfare*, by Clinton E. Arnold.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: PERSONAL EVIL](#)

[SPECIAL TOPIC: SPIRITUAL WARFARE](#)

▣ **"the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you"** This is a common closing for Paul (cf. 1 Cor. 16:23; 2 Cor. 13:14; Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23; Col. 4:18; 1 Thess. 5:28; 2 Thess. 3:18 and also in Rev. 22:21). It was possibly written in his own hand. It was his way of verifying his letters (cf. 2 Thess. 3:17; 1 Cor. 16:21; Col. 4:18). The main theme of the NT is YHWH, the God of mercy, and His Son, the manifestation of that mercy.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: CHRIST JESUS AS LORD](#)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 16:21

²¹Timothy my fellow worker greets you, and *so do* Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

16:21-23 These verses are a post script (NJB). Paul's co-workers at Corinth sent their greetings.

16:21 "Lucius" This could have been

1. Luke the physician (cf. Col. 4:14), or possibly an idiom for "highly educated one"
2. Lucius of Cyrene (cf. Acts 13:1)
3. an unknown Christian

▣ **"Jason"** This is possibly the Jason in whose house Paul stayed at Thessalonica (cf. Acts 17:5-9).

▣ **"Sosipater"** This man is possibly the Sopater of Berea in Acts 20:4.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 16:22

²²**I, Tertius, who write this letter, greet you in the Lord.**

16:22 "I, Tertius, who write this letter" NJB calls this a "second postscript." Paul used a scribe (*amanuensis*) to write his letters (cf. 1 Cor. 16:21; Gal. 6:11; Col. 4:18; 2 Thess. 3:17). I think Paul had poor eye sight (see note at 2 Cor. 12:7) and could not write the small, tight script needed to preserve space on a sheet of papyrus or leather scroll (cf. Gal. 6:18)!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 16:23-24

²³**Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the brother.** ²⁴**[The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.]**

16:23 "Gaius" This could have been

1. Gaius Titius Justus of Acts 18:7
2. Gaius of Derbe (cf. Acts 19:29; 20:4; 1 Cor. 1:14)
3. the Gaius of 3 John 1

▣ **"host to me and the whole church"** This was the hospitality needed in the early church (cf. Rom. 12:13; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8; Heb. 13:2; 1 Pet. 4:9). Some believers with resources allowed the traveling Christian ministers to room and board. Some, as this man, also opened his home to be the meeting place for gathered events. House churches were the norm for over two hundred years.

▣ **"Erastus, the city treasurer"** He is also mentioned in Acts 19:22; 2 Tim. 4:20. He had an itinerant ministry connected to Paul.

▣ **"Quartus"** This name in Latin means "fourth." He was possibly the brother of Tertius, which in Latin means "third" (cf. Rom. 16:22).

16:24 This verse is not present in the early Greek manuscripts, P^{46,61}, ⳨, A, B, C, and 0150. It is found in some Greek manuscripts after Rom. 16:23 and others after Rom. 16:27. It is obviously not original with Paul. It is omitted in the NASB, NRSV, TEV and NJB translations. The UBS⁴ rates its omission as "certain" (A). It is an attempted close to the letter and is related to the problem of the closing doxology being at the end of Romans 14; 15; and 16 in various ancient Greek texts.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: TEXTUAL CRITICISM](#)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: ROMANS 16:25-27

²⁵Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, ²⁶but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, *leading to obedience of faith*; ²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.

16:25-27 This is one sentence in Greek. This benediction can be found in ancient Greek manuscripts, both at the end of Romans 14 and Romans 15, as well as here. This context is a recapitulation of the major themes of the book possibly written in Paul's own hand.

Some believe that this doxology may have been

1. the cover letter for the cyclical letter of Ephesians
2. for those on the way to Rome because
 - a. Paul had never visited Rome, yet he says hello to twenty-six people
 - b. Romans 16 is the first mention of false teachers
 - c. this doxology appears in the Greek manuscripts at several different places

It is also possible that Paul made two copies, Romans 1-14 to Rome, Romans 1-16 to Ephesus. Usually these assertions are answered by

1. the fact that many of these early Christian workers traveled
2. the fact that no Greek manuscript of Romans is without Romans 16
3. the possibility that false teachers are implied in Rom. 14:1-15:13

16:25 "to Him who is able" This is another wonderful title for God used three times in the NT (cf. Eph. 3:20; Jude 24). See partial list of the descriptive NT titles for God at Rom. 15:5.

Notice how God establishes believers.

1. Paul's gospel presentation
2. the preaching about Jesus Christ
3. the revealing of God's eternal plan of salvation which had been kept secret (mystery)

Believers are enabled by the knowledge of the gospel. This gospel has now been made available to all!

[SPECIAL TOPIC: THE GOSPEL](#)

▣ **"the mystery"** God has a unified purpose for mankind's redemption that even preceded the fall (cf. Genesis 3). Hints of this plan are revealed in the OT (cf. Gen. 3:15; 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6; and the universal passages in the Prophets). However this full agenda was not clear (cf. 1 Cor. 2:6-8). With the coming of Jesus and the Spirit it begins to become more obvious. Paul used the term "mystery" to describe this total redemptive plan (cf. 1 Cor. 4:1; Eph. 2:11-3:13; 6:19; Col. 4:3; 1 Tim. 1:9). However, he uses it in several different senses.

1. A partial hardening of Israel to allow Gentiles to be included. This influx of Gentiles will work as a mechanism for Jews to accept Jesus as the Christ of prophecy (cf. Rom. 11:25-32).
2. The gospel was made known to the nations, which are all included in Christ and through Christ (cf. Rom. 16:25-27; Col. 2:2).
3. Believers' new bodies at the Second Coming (cf. 1 Cor. 15:5-57; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).
4. The summing up of all things in Christ (cf. Eph. 1:8-11).
5. The Gentiles and Jews are fellow-heirs (cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13).
6. Intimacy of the relationship between Christ and the Church described in marriage terms (cf. Eph. 5:22-33).

7. Gentiles included in the covenant people and indwelt by the Spirit of Christ so as to produce Christlike maturity, that is, restore the marred image of God in fallen humanity (cf. Gen. 6:5, 11-13; 8:21) of God in man (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6; Col. 1:26-28).
8. The end-time Anti-Christ (cf. 2 Thess. 2:1-11).
9. An early church summary of the mystery is found in 1 Tim. 1:16.

16:26 "now is manifested" This mystery or plan of God has now been clearly revealed to all mankind. It is the gospel of Jesus Christ (cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13).

▣ **"and by the Scriptures"** God has manifested this mystery in the person and work of Jesus. This was foretold by the OT prophets. The establishment of a NT church made up of believing Jews and Gentiles was always God's plan (cf. Gen. 3:15; 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6; Jer. 31:31-34).

[SPECIAL TOPIC: YHWH'S ETERNAL REDEMPTIVE PLAN](#)

▣ **"eternal God"** See [SPECIAL TOPIC: ETERNAL](#) and [SPECIAL TOPIC: CHARACTERISTICS OF ISRAEL'S GOD \(NT\)](#).

▣ **"has been made known to all the nations"** This is an AORIST PASSIVE PARTICIPLE. It was placed last in the Greek sentence for emphasis. God has presented the gospel offer to the whole world, which was always His purpose (cf. Gen. 3:15)!

[SPECIAL TOPIC: YHWH'S ETERNAL REDEMPTIVE PLAN](#)



NASB	"leading to obedience of faith"
NKJV, Peshitta	"for obedience to the faith"
NRSV	"to bring about the obedience of faith"
TEV	"leading to obedience of faith"
NJB	"to bring them to the obedience of faith"
REB	"to bring them to faith and obedience"

There are different ways to understand this phrase; it may refer to

1. doctrine about Christ
2. trust in Christ
3. obedience to the gospel both initially and continually

Obedience (cf. Rom. 1:5; see [SPECIAL TOPIC: KEEP](#)) must be combined theologically with the concept of repentance and faith (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21).

The NT requirements are

1. faith
2. repentance
3. obedience
4. service
5. perseverance

[SPECIAL TOPIC: REPENTANCE \(NT\)](#)

16:27 "the only wise God" This is an allusion to monotheism (cf. Deut. 6:4-5). Christianity has only one God, just like Judaism, however, the full Deity of Jesus (see full note at John 1:1) and the full personality of the Spirit force us to a "tri-unity," Trinity.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: MONOTHEISM](#)

[SPECIAL TOPIC: THE PERSONHOOD OF THE SPIRIT](#)

[SPECIAL TOPIC: THE TRINITY](#)

▣ "be the glory forever" See note at Rom. 3:23.

▣ "Amen" See [SPECIAL TOPIC: AMEN](#)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. How did Paul know all of these people in the Roman church when he had never been there?
2. Is there any biblical evidence for women deacons (cf. Rom. 16:1; 1 Tim. 3:11; 5:3-16)?
3. What is the implication of so many women being listed in this chapter?
4. Describe the methods and message of the false teachers (Rom. 16:17-18).

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